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In El Salvador, the Private Sector's Coordinated Response to the HIV Epidemic Has Been Consolidated

“Considering that the workplace is a strategic and effective site to address the HIV epidemic, at ANEP we have committed to fostering prevention by means of education programs in the labor sphere, providing adequate assistance and guidance for their treatment.”

ANEP's STI/ HIV/ AIDS Workplace Policy



Photograph: Arnoldo Jiménez, ANEP Executive Director, speaking to private-sector representatives. San Salvador, August 13, 2014.

The HIV epidemic impacts on various social and economic aspects of people's lives and State operations. That is why the express commitment and the active participation of multiple actors who represent the national endeavors are essential. In this context, the business sector plays a major role in the response to HIV, since it is not only a matter of losing human capital as a result of the infection; it is also about the effect it produces on economic cycles that drive national economic growth.

In El Salvador, the business sector started to become involved in the response to HIV, and in March 2014, the National Association of Private Enterprise (ANEP), the principal entity representing El Salvador's productive and economic forces, gathering together over 49 trade associations belonging to 55 economic sub-sectors and more than 14 thousand firms, adopted their own macro workplace policy to address HIV, and became the speaker with corporate social responsibility entities, such as the Business Foundation for Social Action (FUNDEMAS), which is constituted by individuals, companies, trade associations, foundations and universities, with the aim of contributing to El Salvador's sustainable economic and social development, promoting the culture of Corporate Social Responsibility and Entrepreneurship, as well as the business clinics affiliated to the Salvadorian Social Security Institute (ISSS) so that it becomes a strategic partner that will encourage HIV policy and program adoption to expedite access to health services.

As an example of this coordinated response, on August 13, 2014, with USAID/PASCA LMG technical assistance, a workshop was held to develop HIV workplace policies for 12 companies in various sectors. Participants included the ISSS Sub-Director, the Ministry of Health's National HIV/AIDS Program, FUNDEMAS, and the Social Security's Business Clinics, as well as representatives of the business sector in the

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National Commission against AIDS and the Country Coordinating Mechanism.

During the workshop, members were informed about the HIV epidemic in the country, its impact in the labor sphere, the existing legal and policy frameworks, and the importance of involving the sector in the national HIV response. Subsequently, each company started to define the contents of its HIV policy. They will join the other 32 national firms that have already approved their policies and have become active agents to strengthen public-private relations in the response to HIV.



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